

HeartQuest 1.1

Programming and sounds by Ingemar Ragnemalm.
Graphics by Susanne and Ingemar Ragnemalm.

HeartQuest is a simple, fairly non-violent color arcade game for the Mac that I made as a gift to my wife. If your wife doesn't like it, perhaps your kids will.

The first version, b/w only, was made on Valentine's Day 1992. A week before Valentine's 1993, I released the colorized version, which was version 0.7. Now, Valentine's Day 1997, it is the 5 year anniversary, so now it is about time for a somewhat improved version. It is still good old HeartQuest, but with revised graphics and some other changes for a world with higher expectations and hardware capabilities.

Improvements from 0.7:

- The game doesn't get harder as fast. Level 5 was close to impossible before. Now things get harder in a nicer rate. Fewer hearts per level also means less slowdown on slower Macs (e.g. MacPlus).
- A clicking sound warns you that you are getting low on bonus.
- Bonus object should not appear too low any more.
- Flypapers are used up after catching the player.
- Faster "safe" graphics.
- The mouse control is modified. Better? Well, that's up to you.
- Some improvements in the graphics.
- The underlying sprite library (Sprite Animation Toolkit) is safer than before, less likely to crash.

From 0.8 to 0.8.1:

- Smaller size. (Removed 30k caused by a stupid drawing program.)
- Strings in the high scores are truncated so that the score won't be overwritten.

From 0.8.1 to 0.8.2:

- Preference file handling (making it CD-ROM-friendly).
- Clicking in the game window starts or resumes the game.
- No strings are hard-coded, so the program can be localized for other languages only by editing resources.

To 0.9:

- Bonus levels.
- Fixed the "click to start level" box, which was too small.

To 0.9.1:

- In "normal mode", when a bonus object is running, the bonus does not decrease and the level does not end even if all hearts are taken. (My little nephew wants a chance to catch bonus objects even if he collects all heart

first.) Macho mode is still the "hard" way.

To 0.9.2:

- Fixed a bug in the preference file handling. (It was never created.)

To 1.0:

- Fat binary (as if it needed it...).
- Bug fix in the fading routines to eliminate a slowdown in animation that they introduced.
- Another bug fix in fading routines (which previously had problems with more than 256 colors).
- Displays a message while loading.

To 1.1 (the five year anniversary!):

- Prettier graphics, most of it drawn or retouched by Susanne Ragnemalm.
- Fixed a bug in the menu bar hiding routines.
- Switches to 256 colors if possible.
- 640x480 is now the preferred size - but smaller screens still work!
- The bonus sprites are slightly modified.

HeartQuest is *not*:

=====

Violent.

Slow.

Expensive.

Hard to learn.

Big. (~240k as fat binary)

How do I play HeartQuest?

=====

In HeartQuest, you control a butterfly with the mouse, collecting hearts while trying to avoid the sticky flypapers. That's about it. Start by selecting "new game" in the "Game" menu.

The faster you do it, the more bonus you will get. The game has two modes, normal mode and macho mode. In normal mode, the game ends after three levels. In macho mode, the game is over whenever you run out of bonus. The normal mode is recommended for beginners, children, and anyone who doesn't have the hand-to-eye coordination or who don't like to do the game in a hurry.

Sometimes - I'm not saying exactly why and when, that's up to you to find out - you will get bonus levels. In those, a bunch of hearts fall down, and you should try catching as many as possible before they all are gone.

Color, you say. What bit depth? Will it work on a 68000 Mac (SE, Classic)?

=====

=====

It works best in 1, 4 or 8 bits of color (grays are ok too), and switches to 8 bits if possible. It works on old, 68000-based Macs as well - at least my SE. Note, however, that an 8 MHz Mac can be quite slow on high levels.

Why make a game like this?

=====

I made this game as my Valentine's Day gift for my wife Eva in 1992. The first version was a quick hack on that very day. Later, I have developed fast direct-to-screen routines, and I used HeartQuest for testing them. The whole thing eventually became Sprite Animation Toolkit, a game programming library.

Hey, I have seen several other games that work exactly this way!

=====

==

Quite true. The reason is that the source code to HeartQuest is available as part of Sprite Animation Toolkit. Most of the similar games are based directly on HeartQuest's source code. There is at least two games that are EXACTLY HeartQuest, where only the graphics has been changed. I have nothing against these "clones" as long as they give credit to their origin - which most do.

Hm, I suppose you have only tested it on your own Mac...?

=====

HeartQuest has been tested on quite a bunch of Macs (SE, LC, Ilfx, Ilsi, Quadra 950, PB180, PB180c, LC475, PowerMac 6100/60...), under System 6.0.7 and 7. Of course there can be bugs, and of course there are some video cards or screen types that it isn't tested on, so I make no guarantees. Still, it seems to work pretty well.

Bugs and future versions

=====

On color Macs with QuickTime installed, I believe the graphics is fairly good now. If you don't have QuickTime, HeartQuest uses the older, not quite as good backdrop.

On B/W Macs, I have observed problems with the trees. I will fix this for a later version, but don't have time right now.

Although the butterfly and the hearts look nice, some other graphics could be improved a little. We will do that some time, perhaps for the next Valentine's, but if you can improve them, I'd be interested in it!

Why don't you use the full screen?

=====

I do, but only if you explicitly ask for it. Try starting the game with a modifier key (e.g the alt/option key) held down... but if your screen is big, you might have to give HeartQuest a lot more memory. This is only tested on a few screens - no guarantees!

What does that voice and the text on that bonus object say?

=====

Yes, that's swedish, and I don't say anything important, just "yes!" and "that's it!", and the bonus object says "Eva is sweet". BTW, feel free to edit that text (with ResEdit) if you want to make a little surprise to *your* girlfriend!

Does it cost anything?

=====

Nope. HeartQuest is *freeware* - free but copyrighted. Use it, give it away to friends, upload it to BBSs, include on CD-ROM compilations etc.

HeartQuest 1.1 is © 1992-1997 by Ingemar Ragnemalm. All rights reserved.

Have you made other games?

=====

Yes, quite a few. I offer most of my games in two "shareware packs".

- Pack #1 goes for \$15 and has Bachman (with editor) and Slime Invaders as the top items.
 - Pack #2 goes for \$15, and has Ingemar's Skiing Game (with editor) and Bert on the top.
- (Both at once for \$20.)

I am working on a few new titles, which will probably end up as Shareware Pack #3 some day. Not quite yet, but they are getting there. Expect new games during spring 1997!

Final words

=====

My thanks to the testers, especially Dmitry Boldyrev who patiently went through several crashes before I had tracked down every flaw in the direct-to-screen drawing.

You can send opinions and bug reports to me over the Internet to the address ingemar@lysator.liu.se.

Snail mail address:

Ingemar Ragnemalm
Plöjaregatan 73
S-58333 Linköping
SWEDEN